



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Early Education and Care

Transportation and Parent Notifications	Field Operations Policy – Funded Programs
Effective Date: October 1, 2019 Updated Date: April 2, 2020	

POLICY STATEMENT

In 2014, the Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization Act became law. This law reauthorized Federal funding of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), which is used primarily to provide States, Territories, and Tribes with funding for subsidized child care for low income families. The CCDBG Reauthorization included multiple changes to various requirements regarding the provision of child care. These changes were required in order to ensure that children are receiving care in the safest and highest quality environment possible.

In order to ensure timely adoption of certain requirements, the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is issuing new policies to clarify and explain these changes. **This policy serves to outline the Center-Based Funded Program Requirements related to transportation and parent notifications.** Through this policy, EEC seeks to clarify the requirements related to the pick-up, drop-off, and tracking of children during transportation.

In accordance with the Funded Center-Based, whenever transportation is provided or contracted by the program, the program must ensure that **the driver of the vehicle takes attendance before and after each trip and conducts a complete vehicle inspection after every trip to ensure that children are not left alone in a vehicle at any time [See 8.08 (2)(c)3].** In addition, **the driver of the vehicle shall release children only to persons known or identified to the driver and authorized by the parent(s) in writing to receive the child [See 8.08(2)(c)(5)].**

A Transportation Provider shall be defined as an individual or entity that is employed by or has subcontracted with a Program to provide transportation services, drives a child in a motor vehicle, van, bus, or school bus to or from a child care Program, and is subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 90, §7B or §7D.

Responsibility for Pick-Up, Drop-Off and Tracking of Each Child:

- (1) Attendance Log: The driver or monitor assigned to the vehicle shall be responsible for completing a passenger attendance log to be used to track each and every child during transportation. The first and last name of each and every child received for transport shall be recorded on the passenger attendance log. A sibling group shall not be listed as a single entry.

- a. Pick-Up Procedures: The time the child was picked up shall be recorded on the passenger attendance log.
- b. Drop-Off Procedures: The passenger attendance log shall be updated immediately upon the child being released from the vehicle by recording the time the child was dropped off.
- c. Infants and Toddlers: When an infant or toddler is picked up or dropped off at home, from a designated stop, or from a child care Program, the parent/caregiver or other authorized person, such as a child care educator, initial the passenger log indicating that the child was placed on or received from the vehicle.

(2) Inspection to Confirm that No Child is on the Vehicle:

- a. Driver Responsibilities. As soon as possible after dropping off the last child, the driver shall ensure that no children have been left on the vehicle. The Driver shall:
 - Physically walk through the vehicle;
 - Inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior;
 - Sign the passenger attendance log, with the driver's full name and time, indicating that each and every child is unloaded; and
 - Give the passenger attendance log to either a monitor (e.g. an adult riding on the vehicle who is responsible for the supervision of a child being transported) or to an additional reviewer (e.g. an employee of or person designated by the Transportation Provider).
- b. Monitor or Additional Reviewer Responsibilities. A monitor who was also on the vehicle or another person designated by the Transportation Provider ("reviewer") shall:
 - Physically walk through the vehicle, in addition to the walk through required of the driver;
 - Inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats and in all compartments or recesses in the vehicle's interior, in addition to the inspection required of the driver;
 - Confirm that each and every child is no longer on the vehicle. The monitor or reviewer shall then sign the passenger log with the monitor's or reviewer's full name and time; and
 - Immediately notify the Transportation Provider and the child care program of any discrepancies on the passenger log (e.g., the number of children who boarded the vehicle does not match the number of children that were released from the vehicle).

Parent/Program Notification:

Effective communication between parents and early education and care providers promotes the safety and welfare of children, both in and out of child care settings. Timely communication ensures that children are accounted for as soon as possible.

Programs must maintain on file a transportation plan for each child, signed by the parent/guardian, giving consent and instructions for how the child will arrive to and depart from the program each day. Any changes to a child's transportation plan must be made in writing and shall require parent/guardian signature.

When a parent/guardian notifies the Program that their child will be absent or will arrive later than scheduled on a particular day, the Program shall note on the attendance sheet the absence or late arrival of the child on the appropriate day and, if known, the name of the person who notified the program of the absence or the late arrival.

When a child who is transported to a Program by a Transportation Provider does not arrive within thirty minutes of his or her regularly scheduled arrival time and the parent or guardian has not provided notification of absence or delay, the Program shall immediately contact the Transportation Provider to determine whether the child was picked up that day, and if so, to determine the child's location. If the Transportation Provider cannot be reached, the Program shall then contact the parent or guardian to inform the parent or guardian that the child has not arrived. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached directly (i.e. if the Program does not directly speak with a parent), the Program shall then contact the child's emergency contact person. When a Program reaches a person who can confirm the location of the child, the Program shall document the location of the child, the name of the individual spoken to, and the time on the attendance sheet.